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ABSTRACT

Questionnaires were sent to communication trainers in diverse businesses and organizations to discern how they perform their teaching and consulting functions. Survey results were obtained from 57 respondents (28% response rate) for the following areas: topics dealt with in seminars, workshops, and courses on communication; primary sources for preparing instructors to teach communication seminars; the way trainers carry out their teaching and course evaluation functions; the role of trainers in handling communication problems that arise in their organization; steps taken by trainers to integrate training with job performance; the training skills that contribute to successful performance as a communication trainer; and respondents' ratings of the relative importance of six suggestions for improving university preparation of practitioners. (Implications of the research are drawn for organizational communication courses in colleges, tables of the survey results are provided, and a 17-item bibliography of relevant publications is included.) (GW)

THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENTS IN TRAINING THE TRAINERS: SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING PREPARATION OF PRACTITIONERS

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THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENTS IN-TRAINING THE TRAINERS: Suggestions for Improving Preparation of Practitioners

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As an instructor of organizational communication, I frequently encounter undergraduate and graduate majors who are preparing for careers in organizational training and development. Even though I have served as a communication consultant for several organizations, I feel somewhat baffled when asked 'what do communication trainers do?' Thus when I agreed to present suggestions for improving the preparation of communication trainers, I decided to conduct a survey on what trainers actually do.

More specifically, this investigation attempted to discover how organizational trainers carry out two principal functions: 1) selecting topics, teaching, and evaluating communication seminars and 2) diagnosing and managing communication problems which occur within the organization. This survey then aimed to discern the functions and general competencies of communication trainers and this paper presents the results of this study in conjunction with specific recommendations for improving the preparation of communication trainers.

Earlier survey research on the role of communication trainers concentrated on public speaking skills (Knapp, 1969; Hicks, 1955). In a more recent investigation, Wasylik, Sussman and Leri (1976) surveyed in-house trainers to discover the importance of such communication skills as interviewing, group discussion, listening, and nonverbal communication; to ascertain the target groups of training programs; and to determine the attitudes of practitioners toward communication training. The study I conducted, unlike previous research, focused on a trainer's role; in that it attempted to discern what communication trainers do and how they perform their teaching and consulting functions.

Procedures

To collect data for this study, I mailed questionnaires to a stratified random sample of the Southern Minnesota Chapter of American Society of Training

and Development (ASTD). The sample consisted of in-house trainers, personnel generalists, and external consultants drawn from two groups: 1) those who were with a staff of at least five or more trainers and 2) those who worked with less than five trainers. I felt that size of the training staff might affect the depth and breadth of a trainer's functions.

I used a random numbers table to select the 208 subjects included in this sample. The questionnaire was mailed to 115 ASTD members who worked in companies with a smaller training staff and to 93 subjects employed in the larger training departments. A total of 145 different organizations and consulting firms were included in the sample. For large organizations with semi-autonomous divisions and separate training departments, I included two or three training employees in the survey.

Since this sample represented members of a professional association drawn from a regional rather than a national roster, several comments should be made on the generalizability of this study. First, ASTD is the major professional association for organizational trainers, consultants and human resource developers. It is a non-profit organization designed to promote the professional growth and competence of its 16,500 members in over 100 local chapters. The diversity of its membership and its nationwide appeal attests to the likelihood that its members are representative of the larger population of trainers and developers.

The Southern Minnesota Chapter has 500 members who work in diverse businesses, government organizations, educational institutions, and service centers. Most of its members are employed in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, a locale which headquarters a number of large, conglomerate computing firms, food processing industries, and manufacturing corporations. As a regional association, this chapter may be atypical in its excellence in programming and its membership

growth. However, its members are employed by organizations that seem representative of those in other parts of the nation.

The survey form consisted of twenty-four questions with multiple sub-parts. The questions were divided into the following areas:

1. Seven of them focused on the trainer's role as instructor and addressed such issues as the communication topics, objectives, and evaluation procedures employed in communication workshops;
2. Four questions explored how trainers learned about organizational communication problems and how they diagnosed and managed these issues;
3. Two questions asked respondents to rank the skills that are necessary for successful instruction of communication seminars and for effective managment of communication problems;
4. Another question asked trainers to rate the importance of six suggestions for improving college preparation of trainers and consultants; and
5. Ten questions tapped background and demographic information from trainers.

Results

In preparation for this paper, I analyzed data from 57 questionnaires. This number represented a 28% return rate, which was below the acceptable 35 to 50% response for mail questionnaires (Selltiz, Wrightsman, Cook, 1976). I conducted a follow-up campaign urging respondents to return the survey and I've received some additional forms; thus the findings reported in this paper are tentative rather than conclusive.

These 57 surveys represented 54 different organizations; four of them were private consulting firms. Eighteen of the 54 were drawn from trainers in larger departments while 29 came from respondents employed in the smaller training programs. Table 1 presents a breakdown of frequencies and percentages of responses by type of organization.

Ten questions on the survey concerned demographic information about the trainers and their respective organizations. The typical respondent was a training and development practitioner (68%) from an organization of 300 to

5,000 employees (58%) and from a training and development staff of two to eight people (47%). The typical trainer ranged in age from 25 to 35 (44%) had an advanced degree or graduate work toward a degree (81%; 54% had either a Masters or a Doctorate degree), took one to three college courses in speech-communication (42%; 23% of the respondents either majored or minored in speech-communication), had no coursework in journalism (56%), and took four to six college classes in English (44%). Hence, the respondents included in this sample were young, well-educated with college coursework in oral and written communication and employed as a training and development practitioner for a moderate-size organization.

In addition to this demographic data, each practitioner estimated the percentage of training programs in his department devoted to communication issues and assessed the relative importance of organizational communication programs in the activities of his department. Estimates ranged from less than 5% to more than 50% of the training programs devoted to communication topics. Communication programs constituted an average of 20% of the training departments' activities; however twelve trainers estimated that more than 50% of their programs included communication topics. Furthermore, 82% of the respondents rated communication as important or very important in their company's training functions. These findings parallel those of Wasylik, et. al. (1976) in that the majority of practitioners in this study also regarded communication training as a vital element in their organizational development programs.

To gain further insights about this demographic data, I conducted an exploratory study on the relationship among these variables. More specifically, I ran nine two-way Chi-Square contingency tables between each independent variable (percentages of programs on communication topics, importance of communication training, and speech-communication education) and each dependent variable (size of organization, size of training staff, and highest level of formal

education). The appendix of this paper contains details on the size of tables and on tests of significance. Since this analysis was exploratory in nature, the results presented in this paper are probative and subject to further analysis. Organizational size was not significantly associated with any of the three independent measures. But the size of a company's training staff was significantly related to the percentage of programs on communication issues, the importance of organizational communication, and speech-communication education. It appeared that larger-sized training departments placed greater emphasis on communication training and had more formal speech-communication education than did smaller-size training staffs. Additional tests are needed, however, to determine the overlap between pairs of relationships and to estimate the extent of linearity present in these associations. The third dependent measure, formal education, was significantly linked with importance of communication and with speech-communication education. Respondents with more formal education perceived communication training as more important in their programs than did trainers with less formal education.

Seminars, Workshops, and Courses on Communication Topics

Question 1

Question 1 presented a list of thirty-four topic areas frequently covered in organizational communication classes. Trainers were asked to indicate which communication topics were included or have been included in seminars, workshops, and after-hour courses offered by their staff. A 'yes' response meant that a respondent either taught a specialized workshop on this topic or included it as a unit in an introductory communication course. This list of topics represented a departure from those included in previous surveys in that it encompassed a broader and more specific array of organizational communication areas.

Table 2 presents the percentage of 'yes' responses for each topic. These topics clustered into eight communication categories: 1) interviewing, 2) interpersonal communication skills, 3) leadership communication, 4) message flow and dissemination, 5) communication climate, 6) presentational speaking, 7) written communication and 8) group communication. Leadership (68%) and interpersonal communication (60%) were the two categories that received the highest percentage of affirmative responses. The six topic areas that were taught most frequently by practitioners were motivating people (86%), performance appraisal interviews (81%), delegating authority (74%), participatory decision making (70%), communicator style (68%), and listening (67%). A central theme which unified these topics was an emphasis on interpersonal and dyadic relationship skills.

Topics geared toward performance skills, e.g., sales training (44%), persuasive speaking (26%); preparation of technical reports (39%), as well as message flow and dissemination, e.g., upward and downward communication (46%, 47%), sufficiency of information (25%), received a moderate to low frequency of endorsement.

Research on the most salient and the most troublesome organizational communication skills evinced a corresponding emphasis on leadership and interpersonal communication. DiSalvo, Larsen and Seiler (1976) asked 170 business admininstration graduates who worked in entry-level jobs to rate ten communication skills in terms of their importance for achieving success in business. Employees rated listening, routine information exchange, and advising as the three most important skills, regardless of whether respondents were communicating with a superior, with a subordinate, or within or outside of the work group.

Similar results were reported in Wasylik, et.al., study (1976) of in-house trainers; the majority of practitioners perceived listening and interviewing as the most important communication skills. Hanna and Wilson (1977) redefined some of the ten communication skills used in the DiSalvo study and asked

fifty managers to rank their most troublesome communication skills. Again, the most troublesome skills were the leadership and interpersonal ones--motivating people, delegating authority, and listening. Note that these same skills emerged, in my study, as three of the six communication topics that were most frequently taught by trainers.

This consistent emphasis on interpersonal and leadership behaviors coupled with a de-emphasis on performance skills across diverse samples and research studies suggested that trainers have adapted their programs to the perceived needs of their clientele. In essence, the communication skills that the majority of practitioners included in their programs were reported as the most important skills for success in business (DiSalvo, et. al, 1976), the most prevalent communicative behaviors in terms of frequent usage during an average working day, and the most troublesome in terms of potential contribution to communication problems (Hanna and Wilson, 1977).

Yet, researchers should be cautious in generalizing from these findings. Other factors such as organizational size and size of the training staff might impinge on the availability of communication training. In this study I conducted an exploratory analysis on the relationship between topic frequency and five demographic variables and found a significant association between size of training staff and frequency of offering communication training in five areas--handling grievances, persuasive speaking, presentation of oral reports, use of visual materials and conducting negotiation sessions. (Size of contingency tables, X^2 and p values are reported in the appendix). Three of these topics centered on presentational speaking. Therefore, even though trainers placed less emphasis on performance skills and more emphasis on interpersonal and leadership communication, the size of the training staff affected the conclusiveness of these findings.

Questions 2 and 3

These questions tapped information on the types and primary sources for preparing instructors to teach communication seminars. Although 47% of the respondents selected college communication classes as a primary source of training, 37% noted that instructors also received preparation from in-house seminars for trainers and 35% indicated that practitioners attended communication education programs sponsored by other companies. The sources of training on instructional methods were equally divided among in-house programs (37%), seminars offered by a professional association (35%), college classes (39%), and training programs sponsored by another company (30%).

Three respondents mentioned that highly-trained, well-qualified consultants were hired to conduct communication training. A number of these consultants had graduate degrees in speech-communication as well as former teaching experience.

Responses to these questions suggested that colleges were still the primary source for preparing trainers in communication content and, to some degree, in instructional methods; however, in-house programs and professional organizations were playing an active role in training the trainers.

Questions 4, 5, 6, and 7

These four questions centered on the ways that trainers carried out their teaching and course evaluation functions. More specifically, these queries addressed such issues as how trainers choose: 1) the communication courses to offer, 2) the course objectives to establish, 3) the instructional methods to use, and 4) the course evaluation procedures to follow. Subjects were asked to indicate on a five-point scale the extent to which they used each of the alternatives listed. Table 3 summarizes sum of ratings for each alternative, the mean rating, and the percentages of respondents who circled scale points one and two, scale point three, and scale points four and five. The percentages for scale points four and five--to a great extent and to a very great extent--

served as the basis for comparing responses.

The first question in this section concerned the selection of communication topics for training programs. A majority of the trainers (63%) relied extensively on requests by clients or by a particular department in the organization. Practitioners also employed requests made by top management of the organization (61%) and results of need assessment surveys (49%) to determine course selection; however they rarely relied on trainer preferences (9%) or on topics included in other training programs (7%) in deciding which courses to offer.

The next question focused on setting objectives for communication seminars. The two factors which exerted the greatest influence on goal setting for courses were needs of the participants as determined by a needs assessment survey (49%) and subject matter of the course (46%). Responses to the question on types of instructional methods used in communication seminars showed that trainers employed a variety of teaching techniques. Although lecture-discussion methods ranked first in overall percentage (65%) of frequent responses, four other alternatives were selected frequently by more than 40% of the trainers. These four methods were application of course content to participants' situations (54%), role-playing of an organizational event (46%), case studies (42%), and media presentations on content material (40%).

The last question in this section ascertained how trainers evaluate the effectiveness of communication seminars. The two evaluation procedures which trainers employed extensively were individual testimonies from participants (60%) and postconference checklists (49%). Both methods were more subjective and more difficult to document than the two procedures which received the lowest endorsement, determining cost-benefit ratio of the seminar (4%) and quantitative assessment of the goals participants achieved (19%). In fact, almost three-forths of the respondents (74%) indicated that they used cost-benefit ratio to a very little extent and 42% of them employed quantitative methods of course evaluation to a very little extent.

In the main, these findings demonstrated that trainers relied on input from clients or from top management to determine which communication seminars to offer, then they conducted a needs assessment survey of participants and combined results of this study with knowledge of course content to establish course objectives. They employed a wide variety of teaching methods to supplement lecture-discussion and they utilized postconference checklists plus individual testimony from participants to solicit feedback on the effectiveness of training programs.

Questions 8, 9 and 10

The next set of questions focused on the role of trainers in handling communication problems which arise in the organization. As with questions 4-7, subjects responded on a five-point scale for each item. Table 4 summarizes the mean rating, sum of ratings and percentages for questions 8 - 10.

In question 8, respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they encountered twelve communication problems. The communication area that a majority of trainers encountered frequently or very frequently was managerial ineffectiveness as determined by poor listening and by inability to delegate responsibilities and to motivate employees (70%). There was a substantial break in percentages between this problem and those which were ranked immediately below it. The five items below it clustered into the 40 to 45% range of response frequency and covered such issues as developing trust between supervisor and subordinates, developing flexibility in management style, building cohesiveness between members of work groups, promoting shared information between supervisor and subordinate, and improving interviewing sessions.

These findings were congruent with communication topics that the majority of trainers included in seminars and workshops. Again, the interpersonal and leadership communication skills emerged as the most significant communication areas. In like manner, improving presentational speaking, reducing conflicts

between departments and reducing message distortion were communication problems that trainers seldom encountered.

Question 9 asked consultants to indicate the frequency that they relied on specific sources as contacts about communication problems. Practitioners depended on managers of the work unit where the problem was identified and on employees in that unit as sources for learning about communication problems (46%). The use of attitude surveys as a method for discovering communication problems received a frequent or very frequent response by only 16% of the trainers.

In the tenth question, respondents were asked the extent to which they used various approaches to diagnose and reduce communication problems. The three approaches that trainers used extensively were interviews with employees who are involved in the situation (46%), private counseling with these individuals (46%), and provision of training seminars on the communication topic which dealt with this particular problem (42%). Practitioners rated attitude surveys (16%) and T groups (5%) as the least extensively used approaches for diagnosing and handling communication difficulties.

In essence, trainers encountered interpersonal and leadership communication problems more frequently than they did message dissemination difficulties or problems with public presentations. Moreover, practitioners learned about organizational problems from managers and employees in the work unit where the difficulty occurred. Trainers diagnosed and managed these problems by interviewing employees, counseling with the people involved in the situation, and offering training sessions on the communication problem area.

Question 11

The question asked respondents if they had linked training outcomes to job performance, relationships between business and the outside community, and to company profitability. 67% of the trainers claimed that had taken steps to integrate training with job performance. In an open-ended question which probed the type of steps they had taken, their responses fell into four categories:

1) identifying performance deficiencies prior to training and designing special seminars aimed at improvement, 2) offering training in conjunction with on-the-job projects, 3) requiring participants in training seminars to establish improvement objectives and conducting follow-up evaluation sessions based on these objectives, and 4) integrating performance appraisal standards and management by objectives into the goals and evaluation procedures of the training programs.

Fewer respondents attempted to interrelate training with improving relationships between business and the outside community. But the 32% who gave an affirmative response mentioned these actions: providing public speaking consultation to non-profit groups, conducting communication courses and training sessions for customers, coordinating a college student internship program, and developing training packages to be used by other organizations.

On the third item, 46% of the respondents contended that they had taken steps to interface training goals with company profitability. Responses to this item were: 1) linking training to performance and then performance to productivity, 2)using training seminars to improve product development, for example, the use of creative problem solving methods to change product design and thereby increase productivity, 3) offering training seminars on profit management and economic awareness, and 4) designing training programs to be cost efficient and to control for expenses.

In this question, a majority of practitioners felt that their programs contribute to improved on-the-job performance and to increased profitability of the organization. These results are in keeping with Wasylik, et. al. (1976) findings on the goals of communication training. Respondents in their study viewed exchange of ideas and information and increased productivity as the most important goals of training. Of secondary concern were goals which centered on reduction of conflict and on human relations skills.

Questions 12 and 13

These questions centered on the training skills which contributed to successful instruction of communication seminars and to effective management of communication problems. For each question respondents were asked to rank order eleven skills; an ASTD list of 65 basic skill requirements for trainers served as the primary source for the eleven. The same set of general abilities were used in both questions; hence it was possible to compare the rankings of each skill between the two questions. Table 6 summarizes the mean rank and the percentages for 1 to 3 ranks, 4 to 7 ranks, and 8 to 11 ranks for the instructional training skills and Table 7 presents the same categories of data for rankings of problem-solving abilities.

Empathy and listening skills received the highest mean rank for both training functions, while persuasive ability and research skills were ranked lowest for both questions. Another skill which ranked high for both functions was the ability to analyze problems and diagnose situations. Evidently trainers see this as a critical function for seminar sessions as well as trouble-shooting activities. Performance-related skills such as knowledge of communication content and flexibility of style to match audience situation were deemed more important for instruction of communication seminars than for effective problem-solving. Corresponding, ability to recognize conflict and impart problem-solving skills plus interview competence were perceived as more significant skills for the problem-solving functions than for instructional activities.

Many of the top-ranked skills for both functions were offshoots of communicative behaviors. Thus our job as trainers of the trainers involved skills development in listening, analyzing communication problems, recognizing conflicts, and developing clarity of communicator style as well as fostering understanding of organizational communication theories and principles.

Question 14

In the last question, trainers rated on a five-point scale the relative importance of six suggestions for improving university preparation of practitioners. Five of them received a high percentage of important and very important ratings. The recommendation which received the strongest endorsement was developing an internship program for students to work in training departments (77%). The next three options with a high percentage of importance ratings centered on course requirements and curricula: 65% of the respondents favored course requirements in interviewing, attitude measurement and data collection techniques; 63% supported course requirements in assessment of learning goals and in evalution of workshops; 63% wanted universities to offer a special curriculum for organizational trainers and consultants; however only 39% of the trainers supported course requirements in quantitative and qualitative methods.

Providing students with opportunities for experience in the field and for a solid background in instructional development were suggestions that trainers added in the open-ended portion of this question. One respondent remarked, "Universities, in my opinion, can't do much beyond the basics to 'train' consultants. Students need a theoretical base then sufficient work experience in business before they can determine if they are interested or even qualified to consult."

Discussion

Although the findings of this study raise a number of issues worthy of discussion, this section will focus primarily on the implications of this research for organzational communication courses in colleges. These courses may be limited to providing prospective trainers with theoretical foundations rather than practical experience, but they can improve existing programs in two ways: 1) by making theoretical approaches and content areas more applicable to non-academic situations, and 2) by providing opportunities for students to

develop instructional and problem-solving skills.

First, current theories and content areas in organizational communication place too much emphasis on dissemination of information. Downs and Larimer (1976) report that upward and downward channels of communication rank first in the type of subject matter included in college organizational communication classes. Topic areas which rank high in my survey of trainers, i.e., leadership, motivation, and listening, are ranked in the middle or lower third of the content areas included in the Downs and Larimer study. Furthermore, textbooks in organizational communication usually contain at least two and sometimes four chapters on channels of communication, network analysis, serial communication, and message overload, distortion and omission. (See Koehler, Anatol and Applbaum, 1976; Schneider, Donaghy and Newman, 1975; Farace, Monge and Russel, 1977)

These topics and the theoretical assumptions which undergird them place undue importance on the mechanistic perspective of communication. (Fisher, 1978) This theoretical purview accentuates the physical, spacial elements of a message rather than the subtle nuances of relationship patterns and the complexities of meaning interpretation in organizational settings. Moreover, by stressing transmission of messages and message channels, this approach treats organizational communication as a linear, unidirectional, causal activity. Viewing communication from the mechanistic perspective is not necessarily inaccurate, but it over-simplifies the complexities that typify organizational activities.

In addition, empirical generalizations from network analysis and communication channel research are of little use to non-academic professionals because they fail to explain 'why'such phenomena occur (Grunig, 1975). Instead, we provide students with descriptions of the types of messages that travel up and down the channels and the modes of communication appropriate for various channels without sufficient explanation as to why these network functions develop.

A re-dedication to leadership and interpersonal communication topics in organizations has the advantage of increasing the applicability of course content as well as providing academicians with a framework for examining the same concepts across subsystems of the organization. Unlike scholars who recommend divorcing organizational from interpersonal communication(Downs and Larimer, 1976), I contend that this blend constitutes a harmonious mixture of interdependent concepts. Moreover, this tendency to separate communication into situations or contexts, e.g., interpersonal, small group and organizational, leads to overestimating the importance of numbers and underrating the nature and outcomes of a communication transaction. (Miller, 1978; Bochner, 1978)

Another suggestion to improve the applicability of academic course content is to reduce the number of content areas covered in one class and to unify these concepts. Topic areas in beginning as well as advanced organizational communication classes are often too fragmented and follow a shotgun pattern of development. As a result, student fail to synthesize concepts into the larger gestalt that depicts organizational situations.

Secondly, organizational communication programs should provide opportunities for developing training skills. In particular, programs should require students to gain experience in assessing and evaluating learning goals, in designing training programs for different types of audiences and in utilizing a variety of teaching methods. In classroom exercises, instructors should develop role-playing, case study, and simulation methods to confront students with realistic problems and encourage development of diagnostic and conflict-management skills. Also, whenever possible, universities should offer internships and field experience in organizations.

The image of training programs in business is changing. Whereas some people viewed training as a 'fringe benefit' operation with packaged instructional units, they now see it as a goal-oriented, problem-solving activity aimed at manpower needs of the organization. Moreover, training programs are striving

to demonstrate cost/benefit relationships, achievement of specific objectives, improvements in job performance, and contributions to productivity. To accomplish these endeavors, trainers need to rely on more sophisticated procedures for assessing learning goals and evaluating training programs. This study reflected a change in the traditional reliance on attitude surveys; trainers in this study rarely employed this method of data collection. Yet, respondents in this study followed the more traditional and less specific measures for evaluating training programs--the use of postconference checklists and testimonies from seminar participants.

As Kenneth Blanchard notes, "No longer can trainers specialize in one type of training, e.g., job enrichment, MBO, grid training,...The old philosophy of 'have training package will travel' is no longer viable... trainers are going to have to sharpen their skills in organizational diagnosis... and help develop more effective human organizations." ("Looking Ahead", 1976, p. 29) Universities must do their part to help trainers develop competencies to meet these challenges.

TABLE 1

Types of Organizations**

Frequency and Percentage of Responses to Survey on Organizational Communication

Type of Organization	Frequency of Responses	% of Total Responses
Hardware Manufacturing and Industrial Products	13	24%
Banks and Financial Institutions	8	15%
Private Consulting Firms	7	12%
Hospitals	6	11%
Food Processing and Packaging	4	7%
Insurance Companies	4	7%
Government Agencies	3	6%
Department Stores	3	6%
Utility Companies	2	4%
Media Corporations	2	4%
Civil & Religious Organization	2	4%
TOTAL	54	100%

**The names of specific organizations represented in this study are withheld to preserve anonymity in the reporting the data.

Table 2

Communication Topics Included in Training Seminars and Workshops

		% of 'yes' Responses
A.	Interviewing	51%
1.	Performance Appraisal Interviews	81%
2.	Employment Interviews	58%
3.	Counseling Interviews	42%
4.	Exit Interviews	23%
B.	Interpersonal Communication Skills	60%
1.	Communication Style	68%
2.	Listening	67%
3.	Coaching Skills	53%
4.	Nonverbal Communication Skills	51%
C.	Leadership and Communication	68%
1.	Motivating People	86%
2.	Delegating Authority	74%
3.	Giving Criticism	65%
4.	Handling Grievances	58%
5.	Giving Directions	56%
D.	Message Flow in Organizations	40%
1.	Downward Communication	47%
2.	Upward Communication	46%
3.	Lateral Communication	33%
4.	Rumor Channels	33%
E.	Communication Climate	50%
1.	Participative Decision-Making	70%
2.	Supportiveness Between Superior and Subordinates	61%
3.	Openness Between Employees	44%
4.	Trust and Credibility Levels Among Employees	25%
5.	Sufficiency of Information	33%
F.	Presidential Speaking	33%
1.	Use of Visual Materials	51%
2.	Sales Training	44%
3.	Presentation of Oral Reports	44%
4.	Persuasive Speaking	26%
G.	Written Communication	38%
1.	Memorandum and Letter Writing	63%
2.	Preparation of Technical Reports	39%
3.	Newsletters, Press Releases	12%

Table 2 (continued)

H. Group Communication	35%
1. Running Effective Meetings	53%
2. Team Building	53%
3. Conference Planning	30%
4. Negotiation Sessions	19%
5. T Groups, Encounter Groups	18%

Six Communication Topics With Highest Percentages

1. Motivating People	86%
2. Performance Appraisal Interviews	81%
3. Delegating Authority	74%
4. Participative Decision-Making	70%
5. Communication Style	68%
6. Listening	67%

Six Communication Topics With Lowest Percentages

1. Newsletters, Press Releases	12%
2. T Groups, Encounter Groups	18%
3. Negotiation Sessions	19%
4. Sufficiency of Information	25%
5. Persuasive Speaking	26%

TABLE 3

Teaching and Course Evaluation Functions of Trainers

Mean Ratings, Sum of Ratings, and Percentages of Responses for Sets of Scale Points

Question # 4 How do you determine which communication courses to offer?	Mean Rating	Sum of Ratings	N	% of Responses for Scale Point 4 & 5	% of Responses for Scale Point 3	% of Responses for Scale Points 1 & 2
Alternatives				To A Great Extent	To Some Extent	To a Little Extent
1. Requested by the client or by a particular department.	3.6	206	51	63%	21%	11%
2. Requested by top management.	3.4	192	52	62%	16%	19%
3. Based on attitude surveys.	2.5	140	51	26%	19%	49%
4. Based on a needs assessment program	3.2	181	51	49%	21%	25%
5. Individual trainer chooses topics that he/she prefers	1.8	103	48	97%	21%	60%
6. Requested by manager of the training department	2.8	159	51	37%	25%	33%
7. Included in training programs offered by other companies	1.8	104	47	7%	26%	54%

	Mean Rating	Sum of Ratings	N	% of Responses for Scale Point 4 & 5	% of Responses for Scale Point 3	% of Responses for Scale Points 1 & 2
Question # 5 How do trainers determine objectives for communication courses?				To A Great Extent	To Some Extent	To A Little Extent
1. Attitude surveys of participants.	2.4	138	58	25%	21%	47%
2. Needs assessment of participants.	3.3	190	52	49%	33%	14%
3. Content or course subject matter.	3.1	176	50	46%	28%	19%
4. Objectives used in previous course.	2.4	139	49	21%	35%	35%
5. Skills that trainers think participants want.	2.8	158	52	30%	33%	33%

Question # 6 How frequently do you use the following methods in training seminars?				Very Frequently	Occationally	Seldom
1. Lecture-discussion.	3.6	205	51	65%	23%	7%
2. Role playing.	3.1	178	51	46%	25%	25%
3. Case Studies.	3.0	172	49	42%	28%	21%
4. Simulations of an Organizational context	2.2	125	47	19%	19%	49%
5. Lecture-performance of participants	2.5	141	51	14%	40%	40%

	Mean Rating	Sum of Ratings	N	% of Responses for Scale Point 4 & 5	% of Responses for Scale Point 3	% of Responses for Scale Points 1 & 2
6. Media Presentations	3.2	180	51	40%	35%	14%
7. Videotaping of participants	2.2	127	50	16%	26%	51%
8. Application to participants situation	3.5	198	50	54%	30%	97%

Question # 7 To what extent do you use each of the following methods to evaluate training programs?				To A Great Extent	To Some Extent	To A Little Extent
1. Postconference interviews.	2.6	151	53	26%	26%	46%
2. Postconference checklists.	3.1	179	53	49%	19%	30%
3. Qualitative assessment of acquired communication skills.	2.7	154	50	30%	33%	30%
4. Quantitative assessment of goals achieved	2.3	130	49	19%	30%	43%
5. Instructor effectiveness evaluation	2.9	166	52	26%	49%	21%
6. Individual testimony from participants	3.4	196	52	60%	25%	12%
7. Determining cost-benefit ratio of seminars.	1.6	92	49	4%	16%	74%

TABLE 4

Communication Problem-Solving Functions of Trainers

Mean Ratings, Sum of Ratings, and Percentages of Responses for Sets of Scale Points

Question # 8 Indicate the frequency that trainers encounter each of the following problems?	Mean Rating	Sum of Ratings	N	% of Responses for Scale Point 4 & 5	% of Responses for Scale Point 3	% of Responses for Scale Points 1 & 2
Alternatives				Very Frequent	Occasionally	Seldom
1. Developing trust levels	3.4	191	53	40%	45%	12%
2. Developing flexibility in mgmt. style.	3.4	193	53	42%	42%	14%
3. Building cohesiveness.	3.3	190	58	44%	40%	14%
4. Reducing message distortion.	3.0	173	53	36%	31%	31%
5. Promoting shared information.	3.4	194	53	46%	37%	11%
6. Improving presentational speaking.	2.8	158	53	26%	28%	44%
7. Reducing conflict between departments	2.8	161	52	23%	42%	32%
8. Improving managerial effectiveness	3.8	216	52	70%	19%	7%
9. Improving effectiveness in running meetings	3.0	169	51	35%	33%	26%
10. Handling hostile customers.	2.6	153	52	25%	28%	44%

	Mean Rating	Sum of Ratings	N	% of Responses for Scale Point 4 & 5	% of Responses for Scale Point 3	% of Responses for Scale Points 1 & 2
11. Improving interview sessions.	3.1	174	51	39%	28%	25%
12. Counseling personal problems.	2.6	148	54	25%	23%	49%

Question # 9 How often do these sources function as contacts about communication problems?	Very Frequently	Occasionally	Seldom
1. Managers of the department where the problem was identified.	46%	39%	9%
2. Employees in that department.	46%	35%	11%
3. Personnel staff through attitude surveys,	16%	28%	47%
4. Manager of the training department.	28%	35%	30%

	Mean Rating	Sum of Ratings	N	% of Responses for Scale Point 4 & 5	% of Responses for Scale Point 3	% of Responses for Scale Points 1 & 2
Question # 10 Indicate the extent to which trainers use these approaches to diagnose and manage communication problems?				To A Great Extent	To Some Extent	To A Little Extent
1. Interviews with employees.	3.3	187	52	46%	32%	19%
2. Attitude surveys.	2.5	145	52	16%	37%	44%
3. Private counseling with individuals.	3.1	177	51	46%	23%	26%
4. Organizational development programs.	2.4	134	50	23%	23%	47%
5. Seminars on the communication problem area.	3.1	176	52	42%	33%	21%
6. T-groups	1.3	71	48	5%	4%	81%

TABLE 5

Suggestions for Improving University Preparation of Trainers and Consultants

Mean Ratings, Sum of Ratings, and Percentage of Responses for Sets of Scale Points

Question # 14 What should universities do to improve preparation of training professionals?	Mean Rating	Sum of Ratings	N	% of Very Important Responses	% of Very Important Responses	% of Very Important Responses
1. Offer internship programs in training departments.	3.9	221	49	77%	7%	7%
2. Require courses in interviewing, attitude measurement and data collection methods.	3.6	205	49	65%	23%	3%
3. Require courses in assessment of learning goals and evaluation of seminars.	3.6	205	49	63%	28%	2%
4. Offer a special cucciculum for trainers and consultants.	3.6	205	49	63%	25%	5%
5. Offer more course-work in organizational development.	3.5	198	49	53%	37%	2%
6. Require courses in quantitative analysis of data.	3.1	177	48	39%	42%	9%

Table 6

Rank Order and Rank Percentage of Training Skills

Skills for Successful Instruction of Communication Seminars

Rank Order of Mean Rank	Skill	Mean Rank	% in * 1 to 3 Rank	% in * 4 to 7 Rank	% in * 8 to 11 Rank
1	Ability to listen, empathy	3.16	54%	37%	9%
2	Knowledge of Communication content	3.61	54%	37%	9%
3	Flexibility of style to match audience situation	3.67	61%	28%	11%
4	Ability to analyze problems and diagnose situations	3.86	51%	39%	11%
5	Clarity of written and oral communication	4.98	35%	39%	26%
6	Ability to recognize conflict and impart problem-solving skills	4.98	32%	47%	21%
7	Ability to be effective in formal and informal situations	5.07	35%	35%	30%
8	Ability to evaluate the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of one's endeavors	6.32	23%	33%	44%
9	Interview competence	7.05	23%	21%	56%
10	Persuasive ability	7.12	18%	21%	61%
11	Research skills and ability to interpret data	8.23	12%	14%	74%

*Percentages are rounded-off to whole integers.

Table 7

Rank Order and Rank Percentages of Training Skills

Skills for Effective Management of Communication Problems in Organizations

Rank Order of Mean Rank	Skill	Mean Rank	% in * 1 to 3 Rank	% in * 4 to 7 Rank	% in * 8 to 11 Rank
1	Ability to listen, empathy	2.37	72%	25%	4%
2	Ability to analyze problems and diagnose situations	2.46	75%	25%	0
3	Ability to recognize conflict and impart problem-solving skills	3.79	47%	44%	9%
4	Calrity of written and oral communication	5.00	32%	42%	26%
5	Ability to be effective in formal and informal situations	5.23	30%	40%	30%
6	Interview competence	5.38	35%	26%	39%
7	Flexibility of style to match audience situation	5.65	35%	30%	35%
8	Ability to evaluate the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of one's endeavors	6.00	25%	33%	42%
9	Knowledge of Communication content	6.05	25%	37%	38%
10	Persuasive ability	7.00	17%	30%	53%
11	Research skills and ability to interpret data	7.84	16%	16%	68%

*Percentages are rounded-off to the whole integers.

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APPENDIX I

The nine chi-square tables on degree of association among the demographic variables in this study are described below:

1. Size of Organization X Percentage of Communication (6 x 4), NS

2. Size of Organization X Importance of Communication (6 x 3), NS

3. Size of Organization X Speech-Communication Education (6 x 5), NS

4. Size of Training Staff X Percentage of Communication (6 x 4), $X^2 = 30.87$, $df = 15$, $p < .02$

5. Size of Training Staff X Importance of Communication (6 x 3), $X^2 = 42.94$, $df = 10$, $p < .001$

6. Size of Training Staff X Speech-Communication Education (6 x 5), $X^2 = 38.43$, $df = 20$, $p < .01$

7. Formal Education Level X Percentage of Communication (4 x 4), NS

8. Formal Education Level X Importance of Communication (4 x 3), $X^2 = 20.08$, $df = 6$, $p < .01$

9. Formal Education Level X Speech-Communication Education (4 x 5), $X^2 = 22.25$, $df = 12$, $p < .05$

APPENDIX II

Chi-square tables on the relationship between frequency of topics covered in training seminars and select demographic data are described below:

1. Size of Training Staff X Handling Grievances, (2 x 7), $X^2 = 17.16$, $df = 6$, $p < .01$

2. Size of Training Staff X Persuasive Speaking (2 x 7), $X^2 = 17.94$, $df = 6$, $p < .01$

3. Size of Training Staff X Presentation of Oral Reports (2 x 7), $X^2 = 17.92$, $df = 6$, $p < .01$

4. Size of Training Staff X Use of Visual Materials (2 x 7), $X^2 = 15.83$, $df = 6$, $p < .01$

5. Size of Training Staff X Conducting Negotiation Sessions (2 x 7), $X^2 = 14.47$, $df = 6$, $p < .05$